

NEWS

August 30, 2021

First West Nile Virus death this year; Central District Health urges caution and use of prevention measures

Ada County, Idaho — Last week, Central District Health (CDH) confirmed the death of an Ada County resident who passed away from West Nile Virus (WNV) contracted in Ada County. The resident was a male over the age of 50 and is the first death related to WNV this year.

"The recent infections and discovery of mosquitoes carrying West Nile Virus serves as a reminder to protect ourselves. West Nile Virus is present in many of our counties and we encourage members of the public to use caution and prevention measures to protect themselves, their loved ones, and their animals," stated Lindsay Haskell, CDH's Communicable Disease Control Manager.

WNV does not usually affect domestic animals, such as dogs and cats, but it can cause severe illness in horses and certain species of birds. Although there is no vaccine available for people, there are several vaccines available for horses. People are advised to vaccinate their horses annually.

WNV Symptoms: Most people infected with WNV don't develop any symptoms (8 out of 10). Those who do develop symptoms experience the following:

- headaches, body aches, joint pains, vomiting, diarrhea or rashes

If you develop symptoms, contact your healthcare provider and get tested for WNV.

Fight the Bite:

Take the following precautions to help you and your loved ones "fight the bite," and reduce the likelihood of WNV infection:

- Wear repellent containing DEET, Picaridin or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus (all EPA-approved repellents) according to the label. *Carefully follow instructions on the product label, especially for children.*
- Avoid mosquitoes, particularly between dusk and dawn when they are most active.
- Remove standing water around your home - this is where mosquitoes like to breed.
- Cover up your skin with clothing between dusk and dawn, when mosquitoes are most active.
- Insect-proof your home by repairing or replacing screens.
- Reduce standing water on your property; check and drain toys, trays or pots outdoors that may hold water and harbor mosquito eggs.

- Change birdbaths, static decorative ponds, and animal water tanks weekly because they may provide a suitable mosquito habitat.

This is the first death attributed to complications associated with West Nile Virus to occur this year in the State of Idaho. So far, twelve counties across the state reported finding mosquito pools that tested positive for WNV. Two people and six horses have been reported as infected in Idaho.

For more information on West Nile Virus, including a tracking map by county, visit www.westnile.idaho.gov.

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Information Resources

- Idaho Department of Health and Welfare WNV Information:
<https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/health-wellness/diseases-conditions/west-nile-virus>
- Idaho Department of Health and Welfare WNV Data Report:
<https://publicdocuments.dhw.idaho.gov/WebLink/DocView.aspx?id=18955&dbid=0&repo=PUBLIC-DOCUMENTS&cr=1>
- Ada County Mosquito Abatement:
<https://adacounty.id.gov/weedpestmosquito/mosquito-abatement/west-nile-information/>

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